



Leon County

Board of County Commissioners

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County Attorney

May 3, 2019

Florida Renewable Partners / Gulf Power Company

Timothy Bryant

External Affairs – New Development

VIA EMAIL: Timothy.Bryant@fpl.com

Timothy.Bryant@NEE.com

Re: North Florida Resiliency Connection – CORRECTED

Dear Mr. Bryant:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Leon County regarding Gulf Power's project known as the North Florida Resiliency Connection. The County strongly objects to the handling of the NFRC Project to date and feels rather adversarial towards Gulf Power given the concerns outlined below. However, I am hopeful that Gulf Power is willing to work with the County and its citizens to create a more transparent relationship.

Gulf Power's NFRC website states that Gulf Power is *committed to sharing information and maintaining an open dialogue with customers, public officials, the local community and interested stakeholders throughout the development process*. Unfortunately, the NFRC Project has not met this standard. The Board of County Commissioners only recently learned of the NFRC Project from citizens living along the path of the proposed transmission line, not from Gulf Power. We learned of the project when Citizens began contacting County Commissioners with calls and emails accusing Gulf Power of bullying and heavy-handedness. Regrettably, we had no answers for them and no way to address their concerns. This situation is in direct conflict with your commitment to *share information and maintain an open dialogue*. Based on what little information is available, citizens have expressed several concerns, including environmental, aesthetic, and safety related to the proposed route; the County Commissioners share these concerns. The County objects to a transmission line route along Tram Road due to the severe impact on the residents and property owners as well as safety concerns. Tram Road is an unlighted two-lane rural road with no curb.

However, based on the NFRC Project website and the comments you provided to the City Commission on April 24, 2019, the transmission line route has not been finalized. At the City Commission meeting, you also stated that Gulf Power is "looking at alternate routes through Leon County." The County would like information on the alternate routes that are being evaluated and the status of said evaluation. **The County, as well as other impacted counties, should be involved in finalizing the transmission line route** to determine help the least impactful route, from an environmental, aesthetic and safety perspective.

We understand that final work to identify pole locations remains in progress. **The County should be involved in finalizing the pole locations**. We are concerned that without our input and input from our citizens that the poles will be placed in obstructive and unsightly locations near homes.

near homes. The County requests that Gulf Power work with impacted property owners to ensure that residents are reasonably satisfied with poles that will be located on their properties.

The County understands that there is no formal process to allow for citizen input, and therefore, the County requests Gulf Power host an informational public hearing to educate the County government and its citizens about the NFRC Project and to allow citizens to provide input. In the meantime, **the County requests the following information** about the NFRC Project:

- the current proposed transmission line route through Leon County and any analysis as to why said path was chosen;
- alternate routes through Leon County that have been assessed and any analysis as to why said routes were not chosen;
- status of evaluation of alternate routes;
- the voltage of the power transmission lines;
- the pole specifications, including the proposed height and distances between each pole;
- the pole locations, including whether the pole will be located within the right-of-way or easement, distances between the poles and homes/other structures, the right-of-way, and the roadway;
- purpose of easements (i.e. maintenance of poles or for placement of poles);
- analysis/study of the impact of the NFRC Project on the groundwater, surface water, wetlands, spring zones, karst features, and/or the likelihood of sinkholes within Leon County;
- analysis/study of the impact of the NFRC Project on trees, including tree removals, buffer impacts and impacts to tree canopies and/or tree root systems;
- analysis/study regarding safety of the traveling public along the proposed transmission route, including Tram Road; and
- the proposed timeline for the NFRC Project, including acquisition and construction phases.

I look forward to hearing from you and the County looks forward to working with you as a partner throughout the NFRC Project.

Sincerely,



Jimbo Jackson

Chairman

cc:

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Herbert W.A. Thiele, County Attorney

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